

2005-2006 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

Cover Sheet

Type of School: (Check all that apply) ☒ Elementary ___ Middle ___ High ___ K-12 ___ Charter

Name of Principal Mr. John C. Anderson, Jr.
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Seven Oaks Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 2800 Ashland Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address)

Columbia, SC 29210-5010
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Lexington/Richland State School Code Number* 3205045

Telephone (803) 798-6500 Fax (803) 750-3317

Website/URL www.lex5.k12.sc.us/soes E-mail jcanders@lex5.k12.sc.us

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

(Principal's Signature) Date January 31, 2006

Name of Superintendent* Mr. TEC Dowling (Interim Superintendent)
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Lexington/Richland School District #5 Tel. (803) 732-8000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

Date January 31, 2006

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mrs. Paula Hite
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this package, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature) Date January 31, 2006

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

[Include this page in the school's application as page 2.]

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has not been in school improvement status or been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2005-2006 school year.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2000 and has not received the 2003, 2004, or 2005 *No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools Award*.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing the OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if the OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school, or the school district as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:
- | | |
|-----------|---|
| <u>11</u> | Elementary schools |
| <u>4</u> | Middle schools |
| <u>0</u> | Junior high schools |
| <u>3</u> | High schools |
| <u>1</u> | Other - Alternative Academy for Success |
| <u>19</u> | TOTAL |
2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \$8,253
- Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$7,350

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- [] Urban or large central city
- [X] Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
- [] Suburban
- [] Small city or town in a rural area
- [] Rural
4. 4 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
- If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?
5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total		Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	15	5	20		7			
K	44	39	83		8			
1	40	50	90		9			
2	34	46	80		10			
3	39	37	76		11			
4	41	43	84		12			
5	35	43	78		Other			
6								
			TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →					511

[Throughout the document, round numbers to avoid decimals.]

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the students in the school:
- | | |
|------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>37</u> | % White |
| <u>51</u> | % Black or African American |
| <u>5</u> | % Hispanic or Latino |
| <u>7</u> | % Asian/Pacific Islander |
| <u>0</u> | % American Indian/Alaskan Native |
| 100 | % Total |

Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 21 %

[This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.]

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	58
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	49
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	107
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	511
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	21%
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	21

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 8 %
42 Total Number Limited English Proficient

Number of languages represented: 6

Specify languages: Spanish, Hmong, Arabic, Vietnamese, Chinese (Mandarin), and Gujarati

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 44 %

Total number students who qualify: 224

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families or the school does not participate in the federally-supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 18 %
93 Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>2</u> Autism	<u> </u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u> </u> Deafness	<u>4</u> Other Health Impaired
<u> </u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>15</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>79</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u> </u> Hearing Impairment	<u> </u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u> </u> Mental Retardation	<u> </u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u> </u> Multiple Disabilities	

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>30</u>	<u>1</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>
Total number	<u>60</u>	<u>5</u>

12. Average school student-“classroom teacher” ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers: 21:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy between the dropout rate and the drop-off rate. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates.

	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	96%	96%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	95%	93%	97%	95%	94%
Teacher turnover rate	10%	7%	5%	11%	9%
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	%	%	%	%	%
Student drop-off rate (high school)	%	%	%	%	%

PART III - SUMMARY

Seven Oaks Elementary School is a thriving school where excellence is never compromised. First opened in 1965, it is located in South Carolina's capital city, Columbia (pop. 117,357), and is part of School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties. The original school was constructed with a courtyard design and over the years has undergone many renovations and had several new additions. The existing structure has 22 classrooms opening to outside courtyards and 17 opening to inside hallways.

The mission of Seven Oaks Elementary School, united with our community in a commitment to excellence, is to ensure academic, personal, physical, and social development of every child by instilling self-confidence and providing the knowledge, skills, and experiences to meet the challenges of the future. Seven Oaks has a neighborhood school atmosphere but is not a typical neighborhood school. Its 13.5-acre campus is situated between two major interstates and is bounded by heavy business traffic and residential neighborhoods. Twelve apartment complexes contribute to the 21% mobility rate and 46% single-parent families at the school. In addition, 1% of our students are considered homeless. Seven Oaks serves a diverse population of 511 students in grades 4K - 5. The racial composition of the school is 51% African-American, 37% Caucasian, 7% Asian, and 5% Hispanic. Seven Oaks is a targeted-assisted Title I school, with 44% of the students qualifying for free/reduced priced meals.

A rigorous curriculum focused on improving reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies is driven by the South Carolina Curriculum Standards. This curriculum also includes direct instruction in art, music, physical education, technology, foreign language (German), media skills, and character education. Teachers use differentiated instruction to support student learning and to accommodate individual needs. Using balanced literacy strategies, research-based mathematics, advanced technology, and explicit instruction, students achieve at high levels. The Academically Gifted Program (AGP) in grades 3-5 supports state identified advanced learners. Twenty-five students participate in Success in Schools while eighty-five students participate in the 21st Century Learning Center, both of which are after school programs. The Success in Schools program is funded through the Safe Schools/Healthy Students district grant while the 21st Century Learning Center is a collaborative program using the resources of the faith-based community organization, Hope Worldwide.

The balanced literacy program at Seven Oaks is supported by Reading Recovery, Soar to Success, literacy groups, and a literacy coach. The GEMS program (Growing Excellent Math Students) is used to re-teach and reinforce math skills. A well-equipped science lab is staffed by a teacher assistant and provides hands-on learning to enhance science instruction. Our 3.5-acre nature trail with outdoor classroom and our Carolina Garden, in the shape of our state and with plants indigenous to the different regions, give teachers ideal opportunities to integrate learning across the content areas. With six different second languages spoken by 8% of our population, an ESOL teacher supports instruction and helps these families adjust to life in the United States through home visits, international dinners, and ESOL family nights at school. Students are encouraged to hone leadership skills, community involvement, and character development through participation in Student Council, Recycling Team, Safety Patrols, morning announcements, and the peer tutoring program. Fine arts instruction is an integral part of the learning environment. Students are involved in musical productions, strings performances, art shows, African drum and dance classes, and after school art and German clubs which enable them to explore areas of culture and find an area that suits their interests.

The educational development of the child is not solely the responsibility of the school. Seven Oaks strives to foster academic excellence as well as strengthen cooperative efforts among home, school, and community to ensure the positive development of its children.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results

The South Carolina Education Accountability Act of 1998 required setting higher curriculum standards for students in K - 12, rigorous assessment of the standards, and an annual school report card reflecting the school's performance level. In response to this Act, the South Carolina Department of Education developed the Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT), which is administered in early May of each year to students in grades 3 – 8. This standards-based, criterion referenced test measures student performance in English/language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies.

The Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test assesses student achievement using the following four performance level indicators:

Below Basic – The student has not met minimum expectations for student performance and is not yet prepared for the next grade level. An Academic Assistance Agreement Plan (AAA) is developed with input from teachers, parents, and students.

Basic – The student has met minimum expectations for student performance and can be promoted to the next grade level.

Proficient – The student has met expectations for student performance and is well prepared for the next grade level.

Advanced – The student has exceeded expectations for student performance and is very well prepared for the next grade level.

A minimum score of Proficient represents the long-term goal for student performance as required by the No Child Left Behind legislation.

Although some disparity in scores is apparent between racial and socio-economic subgroups for African-Americans and the economically disadvantaged, the differences in scores among subgroups at Seven Oaks Elementary are decreasing. In fact, our school has been recognized by the South Carolina Educational Oversight Committee as a school which “Closes the Achievement Gap for Historically Underachieving Groups” in our state. On page 14 of the Assessment Charts, the percentage of third grade African-American students who scored at or above the Basic level in Mathematics increased by 28 points in the past five years. Another indicator of the positive growth made by our third grade students in ELA is reflected by the fact that the percentage of students economically disadvantaged and scoring at or above the Proficient level more than doubled in the past five years. In fourth grade, a tremendous growth has occurred by the economically disadvantaged in Math. The percentage of fifth grade African-American students at or above the Proficient level in ELA has grown from 9 to 25 in five years. We have also earned South Carolina's Palmetto Gold Award for outstanding academic achievement twice. Seven Oaks has received a South Carolina Annual Report Card rating of Excellent in three of the last four years. Our school has met 17 of the 17 required objectives for Adequate Yearly Progress in the past two years, as defined by the No Child Left Behind legislation.

More information on the state's assessment process may be found on the web site www.myschools.com/offices/assessment/PACT.

2. Using Assessment Results

At Seven Oaks, assessment is on-going, diagnostic, and used to drive instruction. Data from PACT is disaggregated by the State Department of Education so that student progress is monitored in all subgroups of learners. Additional assessment tools such as the Cognitive Ability Test (CogAT) and Measures of Academic Performance (MAP) are also used to inform the instructional staff of students' academic strengths and weaknesses. Formal assessment data is analyzed by administrators and teachers at Seven

Oaks. From this analysis, teachers set standards-based instructional goals and tailor instruction to meet the needs of all students. Analyzed data assists in making placement decisions regarding several remediation programs, such as SOAR to Success (reading), Growing Excellent Math Students (GEMS), and after school assistance. Students who score Below Basic on PACT testing are placed on an Academic Assistance Agreement plan which identifies remediation strategies. Data is also used for placement in our Academically Gifted Program (AGP).

The focus of district and school staff development opportunities is driven by assessment results. Staff development provides time for collaboration and study of research-based “best practices” across the subject areas. Our school’s master schedule allows teachers common planning time for additional dialogue on differentiating instruction for students across achievement levels.

The successful use of assessment information has enabled Seven Oaks students to achieve at increasingly higher levels.

3. Communicating Assessment Results

Seven Oaks’ success is fostered by partnerships between the school and the community. *First Night* is an informal setting for parents and students to visit the school and meet their teachers prior to the start of school. Students and parents are made aware of the procedures, practices, and events for the school year. During the first month of school, *Curriculum Nights* are hosted by each grade level to emphasize the faculty’s high expectations and the responsibilities of students, teachers, and parents.

Communication of student performance and classroom assessments is facilitated via homework agendas initialed by teachers and parents; weekly academic papers sent home in packets known as *Tuesday Papers*; weekly progress reports attached to *Tuesday Papers*; a bi-weekly school newsletter; quarterly honor roll assemblies; PTA meetings; monthly classroom calendars; a year-end *Awards Night*, and email. These avenues of communication provide day to day contacts between parents and teachers. More formal communication occurs during parent conferences and distribution of midterm reports and quarterly report cards.

Additional evidence of student performance is displayed throughout the school on bulletin boards, hallways, classroom windows, and the school marquee. Individual and classroom recognitions also include the cafeteria’s *Silver Spoon* program, the *Accelerated Reader* incentive program, and perfect attendance awards on a quarterly and year-end basis. Business Partners recognize young artists by framing student art work and giving store coupons for academic achievements. Students displaying desired character traits receive *Ein Euro* recognition certificates from staff members as part of a school-wide incentive program. *Ein Euros* are collected by students and may be “spent” at our school store. These recipients are also recognized on the morning announcements and given end-of-the-year prizes donated by local businesses.

The Seven Oaks School Report Card, prepared by the State Department of Education, is distributed to every parent yearly. This Report Card contains PACT data, a detailed school profile, and teacher/student/parent survey results. This document informs parents of the school’s absolute rating, improvement rating, and whether the school met Adequate Yearly Progress under the No Child Left Behind legislation. Our School Improvement Council uses the Report Card to develop annual goals for the continued growth of our students.

4. Sharing Success

The doors of Seven Oaks are always open to other educators who want to observe “best practices” in education. Student teachers and practicum students from area colleges and universities receive training in our classrooms. Teachers and administrators from surrounding school districts often visit and observe various programs that have proven to be successful with our students. In addition, a school principal from India visited to observe our instructional practices. A former principal of Seven Oaks has used our school as a model in his travels, providing training for foreign teachers and administrators.

Based on the knowledge gained from the diverse Seven Oaks population for many years, our ESOL teacher continues to lead staff development sessions for other teachers within our district and across the

states of South Carolina and North Carolina. She assists the ESOL State Coordinator in disseminating information through a monthly streaming video airing on the South Carolina Educational Television website.

The faculty at Seven Oaks is always eager to share our successful classroom experiences and strategies with colleagues. Numerous workshops and staff development sessions on a variety of topics have been led by our teachers. Examples include *Building a Civil Community: The Morning Meeting*, *Reading Aloud in the Science Classroom*, *Effective Math Strategies-Conference Reflections for Grades 1 and 2*, *Using the FOSS Kit: Air and Weather*, *Worthwhile Activities from the S.C. Science Convention*, and *ESOL-It's the Right Thing to Do and It's the Law*.

Recognizing that we are greater than the sum of our parts, the faculty realizes the importance of sharing ideas and strategies that positively impact student learning. We feel confident in what we have learned and accomplished. As we continue to grow professionally, we are dedicated to sharing our successes with other schools.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum

The academic excellence realized at Seven Oaks Elementary can be attributed to many factors, including the rigorous SC Curriculum Standards and the differentiation of instruction to meet the unique needs of our diverse population. The standards set clear, high expectations for student achievement and identify what students need to successfully progress through our school and become productive citizens of the community. The SC Curriculum Standards align with national standards to ensure our students receive the same content as students across the nation.

Integrated through all content areas, our English/language arts program is defined within a balanced literacy model, and is based on the theoretical principles of Vygotsky, Holdaway, and Cambourne. This model includes the components of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, which are taught explicitly and systematically. Students receive instruction and work independently at their level of development, ensuring realization of their growth potential. Reading aloud and shared reading provide the needed teacher support for students to move toward the autonomy required by guided and independent reading. Writing is approached through a workshop format where students are immersed in the writing process. Instruction is influenced by the works of Graves, Calkins, Culham, and Allington and is guided by the Six Traits of Writing. The Six Traits are both instructional and assessment driven and include ideas, organization, sentence fluency, word choice, voice, and conventions, which align to the PACT writing rubric.

Everyday Mathematics, a research-based curriculum, includes the fundamental mathematic strands of numbers and operations, algebra, measurement, geometry, and data analysis and probability. Using a balanced approach of individual, small group, and whole group instruction, children learn through, rather than about, problem solving. They are encouraged to communicate, orally and in writing, strategies to clarify their thinking and to gain insight into other methods of problem solving. Basic facts are practiced through mental math and written activities, as well as games. The spiraling approach provides multiple exposures to a topic allowing students to revisit and practice a topic over time.

The science curriculum follows the SC Science Curriculum Standards. The use of Foss kits, AIMS activities, and integration of children's literature further student learning. Visits to the science lab, nature trail, Carolina Garden, and other field studies encourage students to think and act as scientists, while recognizing the vital role science plays in our environment.

Social studies instruction is also guided by SC Curriculum Standards and focuses on history, citizenship, economics, and geography. Seven Oaks has a richly diverse student population; therefore, multicultural activities are embedded throughout the curriculum. The use of authentic literature develops understanding and broadens student schema about the world around them, as well as provides an opportunity to learn reading and writing strategies. Character education reinforces good citizenship,

while activities such as American Education Week, Red Ribbon Week, Mock Elections, and the Souper Bowl of Caring enhance the content.

Through Seven Oaks' extensive related arts programs of general music, chorus, string orchestra, art, physical education, foreign language, and technology, students recognize that the disciplines and content areas have authentic connections. These programs are also based on SC Curriculum Standards. The German language instruction incorporates the curriculum of each grade level. Another benefit is that the brain is stimulated for future language learning. Our music program provides students with opportunities to sing, perform on instruments, improvise, and compose music. Our P.E. program is comprehensive, age-appropriate, and grounded in evidence-based principles. Students learn the skills, attitudes, and knowledge needed to develop and maintain healthy and physically active lifestyles. The art program incorporates activities such as spatial relationships, research, writing, and communication skills that support classroom instruction. Participation in the SC Arts Commission's Artist-in-Residence program extends student experiences with storytellers, poets, muralists, musicians, actors, puppeteers, and craftsmen. Technology skills, such as internet research, power point presentations, and publishing are integrated into the curriculum and provide a strong foundation for the use of technology in future learning. Access to multiple forms of technology in the classroom and a fully equipped computer lab allows teachers to instruct in ways that engage all learners.

2. Reading

Reading is central to all learning, because our goal is to develop lifelong readers. Developing children's interest and pleasure in reading is equally as important as developing foundational skills and strategies necessary to become proficient readers. To develop a love of reading, children need appropriate texts, teacher support, and time to practice. Our balanced literacy approach immerses students in authentic literature aimed at enhancing meaning and the love of language, while explicitly teaching skills and strategies to develop fluent, proficient readers. Our comprehensive media center, classroom libraries, and leveled texts provide resources that expose students to all genres.

Classroom instruction focuses on reading with the intent of constructing meaning. Students learn to draw upon prior knowledge, text, knowledge of words, and the graphophonics system to make sense of the text. They become skilled at using self-monitoring strategies when meaning is lost.

Read aloud and shared readings allow for explicit demonstrations of fluent reading, word solving, and comprehension strategies. Reading workshop empowers students to practice skills learned during whole group instruction on an individual or small group basis. DRA, Dominie, running records, MAP, teacher observations, and STAR Reading are assessment tools used to drive instruction. During reading conferences, teachers coach individual students and teach needed skills and strategies. In reading workshop, students get to know themselves as readers through selection of "just right" books that meet their individual needs and interests as a reader. Students assess their strengths and utilize strategies that are most effective in helping them grow as readers. Literature circles afford opportunities for conversations and in-depth understanding of the text. Because writing and reading are interrelated, teachers use literature as a springboard into writing workshop. During read alouds and shared readings, qualities of good writing are introduced. Students become adept at using mentor texts to craft their writing as they learn to "read like writers and write like readers." Immersed in reading and writing, students acquire an understanding of how spoken and written language relate.

Reading Recovery in grade 1, literacy groups in grades 1 and 2, and SOAR to Success in grades 3-5 are interventions for students who will benefit from additional individual or small group support. We are piloting *Fast Track*, an acceleration program for readers achieving below grade level.

3. Mathematics

At Seven Oaks, students develop a range of sophisticated mathematic knowledge and skills using the University of Chicago's *Everyday Mathematics* program. We agree with the program's philosophy that children are intuitively capable of high levels of mathematical thinking. Classroom experiences balance teacher-directed instruction and open-ended, student-driven explorations. Real world situations

encourage students to think abstractly and solve problems creatively. Basic skills are practiced using games. The integration of writing and reading connects literacy to the mathematical world. *Home Links*, *Study Links*, and informational letters create strong home-school connections that keep parents involved.

In addition to the full implementation of Everyday Mathematics, students systematically review basic skills from all strands at home and school using *Drops in a Bucket*, *Fantastic Five*, and *Accelerated Math*. These additional supplements ensure mastery of each of the five mathematics content strands.

GEMS (Growing Excellent Math Students), a Title I math program, serves low-achieving mathematics students who are selected based on test data and teacher recommendations. A full-time teacher serves twelve students from each grade level, second through fifth, with a student-teacher ratio of 6:1. Interactive whiteboards, laptop computers, mathematics literature, and manipulatives actively engage students in the GEMS classroom. The GEMS teacher also works collaboratively with classroom teachers providing both remedial comprehensive reviews as well as current grade-level support.

4. Instructional Methods

Seven Oaks believes EVERY child can learn regardless of gender, cultural background, or socio-economic conditions when provided with the appropriate learning environment. Teachers utilize developmentally appropriate practices based on theories of child learning. Employing our understanding of brain-based learning theory, students are encouraged to make connections and find patterns as new skills and strategies are introduced in the context of authentic experiences and literature. Our classrooms are social environments where students learn through discussion, demonstration, and participation in realistic activities with guidance from trusted adults. A variety of assessments provides the proper amount of challenge to maximize learning and develop reflective, independent students who are capable of thinking strategically. Daily classroom meetings create welcoming communities for our mobile population helping them develop the sense of trust, respect, and belonging needed for learning to occur.

Because not all children enter school with the schema necessary for learning new content, we provide a print-rich environment. Multiple daily read alouds introduce new content, fill in gaps left by content texts, broaden schema, teach reading strategies, and model writer's craft. Student-created anchor charts focus on strategies taught, providing support for independent work. Multi-level materials and open-ended activities allow each child to work at a level of personal success. Explicit strategy instruction with an emphasis on higher-level thinking creates reflective problem-solvers who transfer learning from one context to another. District-created Essential Curriculum Maps provide a framework for teaching, guaranteeing specific grade-level experiences for each Seven Oaks student. Maps eliminate gaps and overlaps in curriculum and assist teachers in their efforts to integrate all content areas.

Teachers integrate streaming video, interactive games and whiteboards, as well as high interest web sites as our use of technology grows. Hands-on activities, guest speakers, and field studies provide further learning experiences. A variety of experiences addresses each learning modality.

Various instructional methods outside the regular classroom support our diverse learning population. PALS tutors (Peer Assisted Learning) work with partners to address weaknesses in reading. The 21st Century After School Learning Center offers a structured learning environment for students to complete homework and participate in enrichment activities. The center also operates a Saturday Academy and a summer program to assist the school in its mission. Students in our Academically Gifted Program (AGP) take an active role in the evaluation of their learning as they explore topics of study in greater depth, complexity, and abstraction. AGP units of study encompass communication activities, research experiences, and critical and creative thinking experiences.

5. Professional Development

Seven Oaks faculty and staff members are committed to continuing their professional growth. We are in 100% compliance with the Highly Qualified requirements of the No Child Left Behind legislation. Our faculty members have met the Technology Proficient level and attend five district professional development days annually, both requirements of the South Carolina Department of Education. In addition, a minimum of one afternoon each month is dedicated to professional development activities at

the school level. These include workshops led by our own teachers and administrators, as well as district level coordinators in the areas of ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies. Individuals who utilize one or more of the school's allocation of staff development days to attend training share their experiences with the entire faculty.

Our district has made a significant investment in advancing the professional growth of teachers in the area of literacy. A full-time literacy coach was added to the staff of every elementary school and provides on-going staff development activities for individuals, small groups, and the entire faculty. Seven Oaks literacy lab gives teachers ready access to professional texts, big books, guided readings sets, and children's literature to help facilitate student growth as strategic readers and writers. Our school is also proud to be a part of the South Carolina Reading Initiative (SCRI), an extensive staff development program. Teachers and administrators have participated in each phase of SCRI, with eight teachers currently committed to a three-year study group. These teachers meet twice monthly for 2.5 hours, working collaboratively to conduct systematic inquiry into reading and writing practices, strengthening and expanding their knowledge base. Faculty members also participate bi-monthly in professional book clubs, exploring strategies for reading and writing in each of the content areas.

Our faculty recognizes that even the most experienced teachers need to re-examine beliefs and practices continuously. As research teaches us more about how children learn, we rise to the challenge of finding the best, most effective teaching practices. Teachers use this newfound knowledge to revise classroom practices and engage students in experiences that are compatible with brain-based learning theory, which positively affects student achievement. Seven Oaks is a place where teachers and staff members serve as the children's cheerleaders, creating an environment where every child is a winner!

PACT Test Scores

Seven Oaks Elementary School

The South Carolina Palmetto Achievement Challenge Tests (PACT) are designed to measure the performance of public school students in grades three through eight in the content areas of English language arts (ELA), mathematics, social studies, and science. The goals of the assessments include:

- *increasing academic performance of all children and, ultimately, raising high school graduation rates;*
- *implementing rigorous academic achievement standards that are aligned with the South Carolina curriculum frameworks;*
- *improving instruction based, in part, on the implementation of these higher standards; and*
- *using the results of challenging assessments that measure student performance relative to these standards.*

Another purpose is to inform various audiences—including teachers, school administrators, district administrators, South Carolina Department of Education (SDE) staff, parents, and the public—of the status of academic performance and of the progress toward meeting academic achievement standards of South Carolina’s public school students. Statewide educational standards are the basis of the PACT assessment.

Data sources:

The test score results* were compiled from the demographic score reports created by the SC Department of Education. These statistics are based on all students who were enrolled at the time of testing.

The percent of students tested was taken from the AYP reports on the SDE webpage. Although the percentages of tested students were not calculated prior to 2003, Seven Oaks Elementary’s policy has always been to test all the students as required by law.

*The 2001 state results were taken from the 2001 Technical Report published by the South Carolina Department of Education.

Seven Oaks Elementary
PACT Math – Grade 3

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	97	91	93	88	72
% At or Above Proficient	60	33	51	43	35
% At Advanced	26	10	20	12	13
Number of students tested	72	88	76	77	60
Percent of students tested	100	100	100	NA	NA
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	-	-	-	-	-
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. African-American					
% At or Above Basic	93	87	97	84	61
% At or Above Proficient	48	16	38	29	29
% At Advanced	24	0	0	7	13
Number of students tested	29	37	32	31	31
2. White					
% At or Above Basic	100	97	100	93	83
% At or Above Proficient	66	44	69	54	35
% At Advanced	29	15	38	16	13
Number of students tested	38	39	29	43	23
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	91	78	86	81	63
% At or Above Proficient	59	24	36	27	26
% At Advanced	32	11	6	8	11
Number of students tested	22	37	36	26	19
3. Not Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	100	100	100	92	76
% At or Above Proficient	60	39	65	51	39
% At Advanced	24	10	33	14	15
Number of students tested	50	51	40	51	41
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	83	83	82	73	72
% At or Above Proficient	31	30	34	31	33
% At Advanced	10	8	12	12	16

Seven Oaks Elementary
PACT ELA – Grade 3

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	96	96	85	92	88
% At or Above Proficient	80	71	49	51	52
% At Advanced	20	23	12	4	3
Number of students tested	71	84	74	76	60
Percent of students tested	100	100	100	NA	NA
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	-	-	-	-	-
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. African-American					
% At or Above Basic	93	92	78	84	84
% At or Above Proficient	79	50	41	39	52
% At Advanced	14	11	3	0	3
Number of students tested	28	36	32	31	31
2. White					
% At or Above Basic	97	100	96	100	96
% At or Above Proficient	79	87	61	60	52
% At Advanced	24	32	25	7	4
Number of students tested	38	38	28	42	23
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	91	91	77	85	79
% At or Above Proficient	71	52	40	39	32
% At Advanced	10	15	6	0	0
Number of students tested	21	33	35	26	19
3. Not Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	98	100	92	96	93
% At or Above Proficient	84	84	56	58	61
% At Advanced	24	28	18	6	5
Number of students tested	50	51	39	50	41
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	87	86	82	80	79
% At or Above Proficient	57	56	45	42	41
% At Advanced	9	10	5	4	3

Seven Oaks Elementary
PACT Math – Grade 4

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	87	86	90	88	73
% At or Above Proficient	57	48	49	42	25
% At Advanced	24	22	22	19	11
Number of students tested	84	77	82	65	89
Percent of students tested	100	100	100	NA	NA
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	-	-	-	-	-
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. African-American					
% At or Above Basic	75	81	88	81	57
% At or Above Proficient	42	35	26	28	6
% At Advanced	11	11	9	13	0
Number of students tested	36	37	34	32	35
2. White					
% At or Above Basic	100	100	95	93	81
% At or Above Proficient	74	69	64	59	38
% At Advanced	29	38	31	22	17
Number of students tested	34	29	39	27	47
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	74	78	90	81	63
% At or Above Proficient	40	34	29	23	13
% At Advanced	17	6	10	4	8
Number of students tested	35	32	31	26	24
3. Not Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	96	91	90	92	77
% At or Above Proficient	69	58	61	54	29
% At Advanced	29	33	29	28	12
Number of students tested	49	45	51	39	65
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	79	80	81	75	67
% At or Above Proficient	41	36	34	36	26
% At Advanced	14	14	14	15	10

Seven Oaks Elementary
PACT ELA – Grade 4

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	93	86	83	89	86
% At or Above Proficient	55	54	45	52	43
% At Advanced	2	8	4	2	1
Number of students tested	83	76	80	63	88
Percent of students tested	100	100	100	NA	NA
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	-	-	-	-	-
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. African-American					
% At or Above Basic	89	81	79	84	83
% At or Above Proficient	43	42	33	42	17
% At Advanced	3	3	3	0	0
Number of students tested	35	36	33	31	35
2. White					
% At or Above Basic	100	97	90	92	87
% At or Above Proficient	65	69	58	54	57
% At Advanced	3	14	5	4	2
Number of students tested	34	29	38	26	47
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	88	81	83	76	75
% At or Above Proficient	50	52	37	28	17
% At Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	34	31	30	25	24
3. Not Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	96	89	82	97	91
% At or Above Proficient	59	56	50	68	53
% At Advanced	4	13	6	3	2
Number of students tested	49	45	50	38	64
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	80	81	76	81	81
% At or Above Proficient	36	38	33	34	38
% At Advanced	3	3	2	2	2

Seven Oaks Elementary
PACT Math – Grade 5

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	87	85	71	87	75
% At or Above Proficient	94	51	28	51	32
% At Advanced	22	24	6	18	11
Number of students tested	83	85	72	85	63
Percent of students tested	100	100	100	NA	NA
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	-	-	-	-	-
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. African-American					
% At or Above Basic	80	71	64	72	50
% At or Above Proficient	15	26	15	17	9
% At Advanced	8	11	3	7	0
Number of students tested	39	38	39	29	22
2. White					
% At or Above Basic	97	97	76	98	90
% At or Above Proficient	61	77	41	71	47
% At Advanced	36	36	7	25	18
Number of students tested	31	39	29	49	38
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	82	85	57	81	65
% At or Above Proficient	23	37	14	42	20
% At Advanced	13	11	7	12	5
Number of students tested	39	27	28	26	20
3. Not Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	91	85	80	90	79
% At or Above Proficient	45	57	36	54	37
% At Advanced	30	29	5	20	14
Number of students tested	44	58	44	59	43
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	77	76	75	71	63
% At or Above Proficient	32	32	28	29	28
% At Advanced	15	14	8	11	11

Seven Oaks Elementary
PACT ELA – Grade 5

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001
Testing Month	May	May	May	May	May
SCHOOL SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	84	86	76	83	82
% At or Above Proficient	41	44	28	30	36
% At Advanced	3	4	3	2	0
Number of students tested	79	84	71	84	62
Percent of students tested	100	99	100	NA	NA
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	-	-	-	-	-
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. African-American					
% At or Above Basic	78	74	64	72	59
% At or Above Proficient	25	29	18	3	9
% At Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	36	38	39	29	22
2. White					
% At or Above Basic	94	95	89	92	95
% At or Above Proficient	61	59	39	47	53
% At Advanced	7	8	4	4	0
Number of students tested	31	39	28	49	38
3. Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	81	92	59	69	68
% At or Above Proficient	31	31	7	31	16
% At Advanced	0	0	0	4	0
Number of students tested	36	26	27	26	19
3. Not Free/Reduced Lunch					
% At or Above Basic	86	83	86	90	88
% At or Above Proficient	49	50	41	29	44
% At Advanced	5	5	5	2	0
Number of students tested	43	58	44	58	43
STATE SCORES					
% At or Above Basic	77	77	68	75	74
% At or Above Proficient	30	27	21	25	28
% At Advanced	2	2	1	1	2